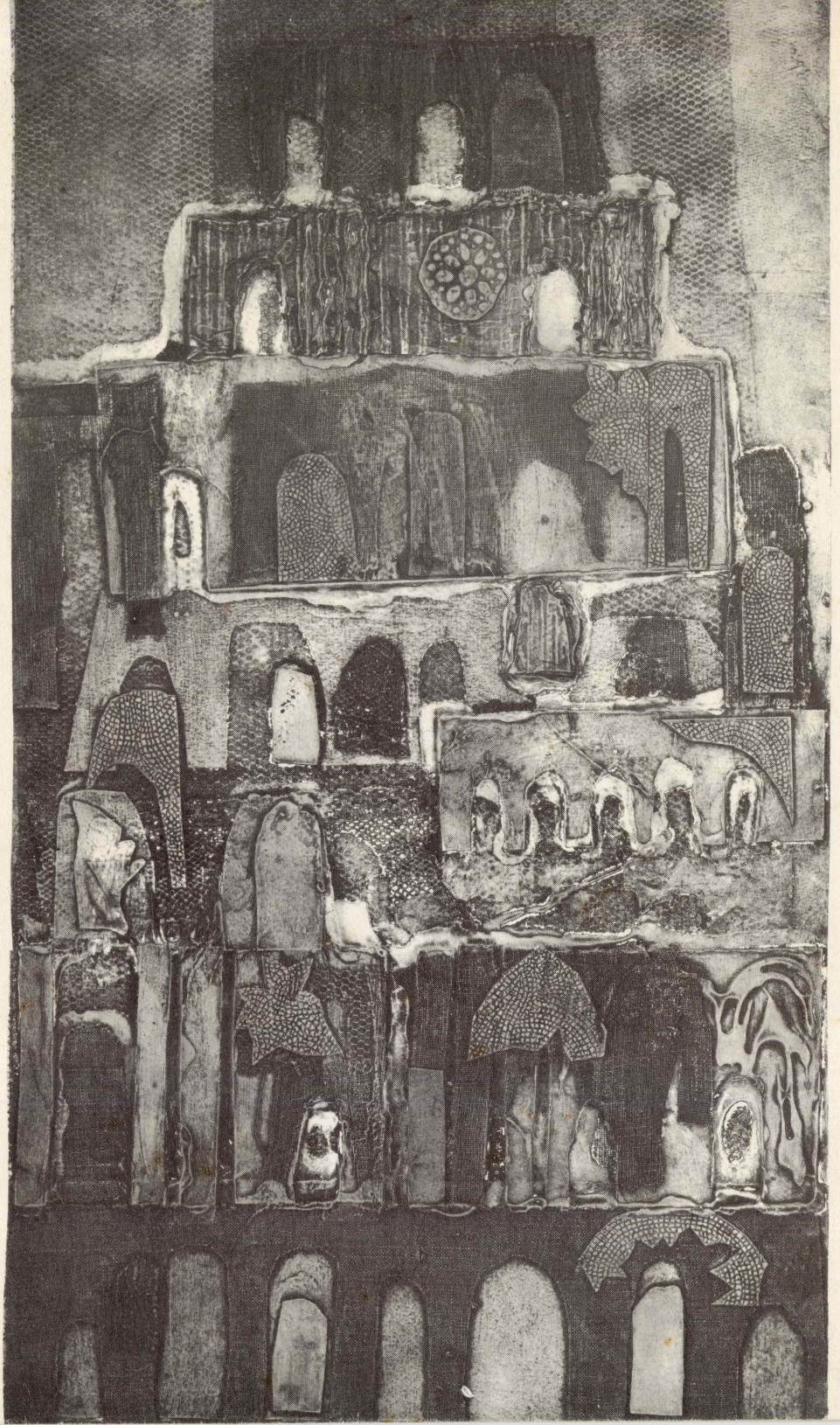

TOWER

Winter '69

The Tower

Winter, 1969

THE LITERARY MAGAZINE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MONTEVALLO

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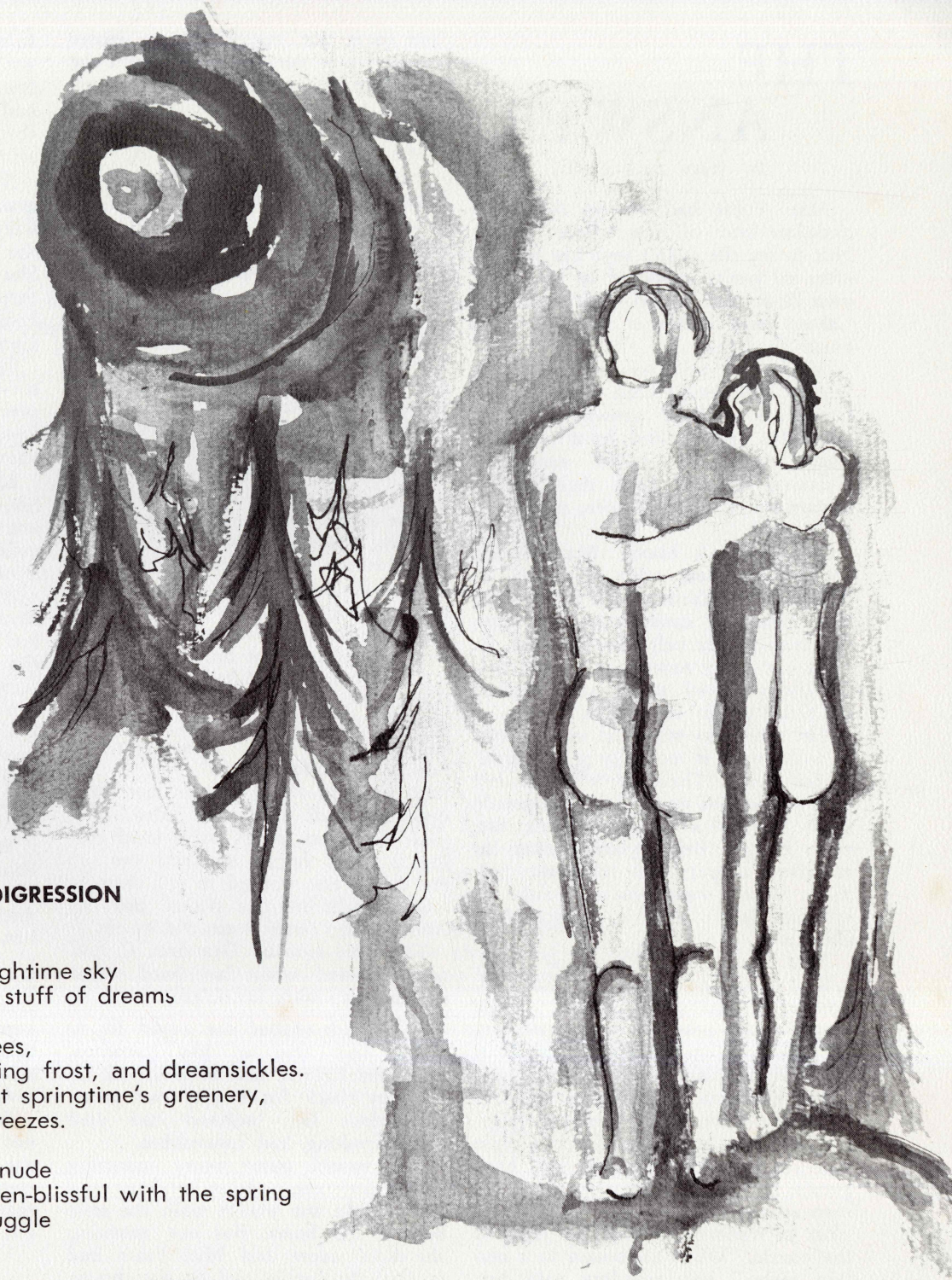

JANUARY DIGRESSION

This celestial equestrian
Galloping through the nightime sky
Spraying all creation with the stuff of dreams
Piling it up so cleverly,
Built on barren winter trees,
Dangling into breakfast morning frost, and dreamsickles.
Chilled, but potent yet as fullest springtime's greenery,
Wind chimings in gentle breezes.
Potent in a different way
So that instead of running nude
Down favorite hillsides, madden-blissful with the spring
Couples the world over snuggle
Bundled to each other,
Almost shy.

—T. K. Roberson

THE ANSWER

by Jerry Ann Harris

Mae Faith had always liked her grandma best of the whole family. Not to say she didn't love her folks—after all you're supposed to love your own flesh and blood—but Grandma Calvert was different and so Mae Faith liked her.

Maybe it was because Grandma Calvert had always been with her and her sisters in their growin'-up years while Ma and Pa had been workin'. Ever since she could remember Grandma C. had been there in an emergency; a skinned knee, a broken, a lost doll.

You couldn't blame Ma and Pa for leaving them with Grandma C. The little dirt farm took a lot of their time since Pa couldn't afford help, not even nigger help. So Ma and Pa went out every mornin' with old Sally, the one-eyed mule, and worked the fields puttin' in corn or cotton.

The land was worn-out and its rusty color made it look like it was goin' to fall apart. Their life's sweat fell and was soaked up by the dry, greedy earth. Her folks returned home late every evenin', drawn and listless, to eat their supper and fell into bed. They didn't waste their breath in talk and didn't seem to notice their children.

Mae Faith, being the oldest child, helped her grandmother do the housework and other chores. While they shelled peas or made biscuits, her grandma would talk to her about life and people.

Her grandma was religious and had told Mae Faith about God and Jesus. She told how each person was a piece that fits into the puzzle of life. Each person had to find his own place, his own answer to what life means and what he wants to do with his piece of the puzzle. "We're all bound in a certain niche," her grandma told her, "but there are several places where we can fit. A person's got to find the best place for himself and then situate his life so he can help complete the mysterious riddle."

Mae Faith's mind drank up the words that her grandmother poured forth. She soon learned, however, not to repeat them to her parents. The only thing they would talk about at length was how religion and preachers were no good.

"If Jesus really cared about folks," they said, "He wouldn't let two hard-workin' people slave over a scrape of dirt that'll hardly grow weeds. He wouldn't let them suffer and barely survive on hog jowl and biscuits. Jesus is for the rich who can afford Him and for the niggers who have the time to sit around and sing to Him."

One night they had gotten drunk on corn liquer and not wanting her sisters to see their parents that way, Mae Faith took them out of the room. She had just put them to bed and was teachin' them a prayer when her pa came into the room.

The children huddled together as their father slowly advanced on them, slipping off his belt. He began to wallope Mae Faith calling her a "crazy, good-for-nothin' kid." She tried to ward off his blows but they came too fast and too hard. She could hear her sisters' frightened crying as their father stomped out of the room. She wanted to tell them it was all right but she passed out before her lips could form the words.

The next mornin' Grandma C. had to wash and wrap her head when she came to cook breakfast.

Mae Faith wished she could be as strong and free as her grandma. Grandma Calvert had lived in her little grey shack for twenty-four years; ever since her husband had died from drinking bad moonshine.

She would come every morning before daybreak and fix breakfast and every night she would walk the mile back to her house. But one morning she didn't come and Mae Faith had to feed the family and do the chores. It was the next day before she could get away to see about her grandma. She had known something terrible had happened and she ran almost all the way, her lungs burning from the effort.

Stopping in the yard she called her grandmother's name. Maybe if she were sick she would answer. Gingerly she opened the door and went in. She called again, looking around. Stepping over to the wood stove Mae Faith saw her lying curled-up on the floor.

She must've died trying to light the stove for her hand still clutched a piece of kindlin'. Kneeling Mae Faith began to cry and call her grandma's name over and over.

Now there'd be no one to talk to her, no one to brighten her life, no one to help her find her place. After awhile she stopped crying and just stroked the silver hair back from the wrinkled forehead. For the first time Mae Faith noticed that her grandma had died with a smile on her face, as though death had been a welcome and long-awaited visitor.

She was buried in the pine grove beside her husband. Mae Faith made sure one of the men folks said the right words over her grandma and sprinkled sod on the casket before it was covered.

With her grandmother gone Mae Faith took over all the housework. These chores left her mind free to think about all her grandma had told her. Mae Faith tried to figure out her place in life's puzzle. The answer didn't seem to lay in the day-to-day care of the house and family. Her parents couldn't give her the answer because they hadn't found it themselves. She would have to find her own way.

It comforted her to think about her grandmother every night before she fell asleep. Shortly after she started this practice she had a dream that returned every night to plague her with its mystery.

Please turn to Page 8

AUTUMNAL SCENE

long, brown arms extending
amidst gold-orange feathers,
(the body breathes)
outlines on the blue-grey drop
are moist new, and hazy . . .

The lazy, swaying motions of the lullabied forms
dream me sleepy, dream me dreamy.
Too soft, too far to touch, celestial figures;
Dream me sleepy, dream me dreamy:
"autumn is the dying season"
I know; dusk is falling,
and I am (gone to) tears,
as are those trees whose leaves
are falling; whirlwinds
swirling, swirling, swirling
until they bury the earth.

long, brown arms extending,
feet draped gold-orange
(the body sleeps)
outlines on the blue-grey drop
are dry now and perpetual . . .

—Foley

HAIKUS

Time is the master
Of all who follow the road
Of the falling leaf.

The seasons pass by
In a stream of fluttering
Silvery daydreams.

The winter has come
And put flight to the summer's
Golden day of life.

Leaves, pale and fragile,
Crumple as they fall to the
Sound of winter winds.

—Diana Hamilton

THE CANDY STORE AT THE EDGE OF TOWN

Pennies for peppermints,
stick or cane;
Pennies for jelly beans,
spice drop rain;
Licorice ropes colored
red and black;
After you leave you're bound
to come back
To the candy store at the
edge of town
Where pinwheel pirates spin
round and round,
And lolli-pop people
smile at gingerbread men
In fairy-tale castles
of stick cinnamon;
Hollow chocolate clowns
and marshmellow men
Blow sweet candy kisses
to old and to young;
"Oh it's not for me,
this candy treat,
But there's this little girl
who lives down the street . . ."

After you leave you're bound
to come back
To the candy store at the
edge of town
Where pinwheel pirates spin
round and round
And no one leaves with
a tear or a frown.

—Foley

ARMISTICE DAY 1969

Where once an eagle screamed,
Now sings a carrion crow the elegy
For this child-of-only-yesterday's
Passion for Patriotic Principles of Democracy.

My country, tears for thee
He wept;
Not merely colorless-water and salt,
But red with blood and yellow with the sweat
And piss of fear taught
By undertakers who care
And whose yellow faces smile against the black silk
that those of their occupation wear.

"Fear! None of our boys know that word."
Tell him, mister; don't tell me.
But then he won't answer back.
He hasn't talked much since he
Was crammed into that olive drab plastic bag
With a dogtag jammed between his teeth.

—James M. Joyner

THE TRUMPETS OF LIFE

The trumpets of life sing to me.
I hear love and happiness
But the song is death.
Once a man was here,
A happiness was his.
Now he is gone;
Dust replaces him.
Emptiness is felt
By all those around.

The emptiness grows
As the song is repeated,
As the guns are fired.

A flag!
They pledged to a flag.
They fought for a flag.
They died for a flag.
They lay under a flag.

Red, for the bloody sun overhead;
White, for the soft clouds in the sky;
Blue, for the eyes forever closed.

The trumpet sings sweetly
But he will never hear.

—Diana Hamilton

TO THE OLD GUITARIST

Blue man, pale man,
agéd one with companion guitar,
Strum your melancholy strings.
For one whose ears are tuned or deaf.

Blue man, pale man,
Make music as the eastern sitar,
And pick a tune which with it brings
Lucid visions of Nirvanan death.

Blue man, pale man,
Bony legs crossed and guitar in hand,
Hang not your head so low
While you music me in twilight afterglow.

—Foley

Picasso's picture is on display in the Chicago Museum of Art.

Continued from Page 2

It always began with her grandma sittin' on the front porch in her rockin' chair. Mae Faith could see her lookin' across the river and smilin' at her. Running to meet her Mae Faith would wade into the peaceful stream only to have black water rush over her and pull her down. Thrashing to the surface she would scream for her grandma to save her but her grandmother would be gone. All that marked where she had been was a golden haze.

Abandoned, Mae Faith would struggle to the shore and try to follow her, but she couldn't find her way. Her grandmother was trying to tell her something but Mae Faith couldn't understand what it was.

One afternoon on her way to put flowers on her grandma's grave Mae Faith noticed the old Get Right With God sign tacked to a fence post. Only the words Get God were still visible. Maybe she couldn't find her place alone in a share-cropper's shack. Maybe she needed to go and find where God was and talk to Him about her problem.

She had heard from Nigger Joe that a heeler-man was in town holdin' a revival. She began to make plans for goin' to town and attendin' the services. The next morning, after having done her chores and giving instructions to her sisters, she left for town.

The road ran up and down the green hills like a trail of powdered rust and soon her shoes were dusty red. As she watched her legs swing forward to pull a piece of road under her, Mae Faith turned her mind inward on the dream and its riddle.

Her mind had searched in all the nooks and crannies for the answer. But the answer wasn't in her head. Maybe she'd never find her place in life! This thought caused a shiver to run through Mae Faith. Her parents' thin, worn faces; their listless bodies clothed and burdened in a leaden cloak of despair filled her vision. She had to find an answer!

Mae Faith forced herself to go on and stomping her feet she moved toward town looking for the sign her dead grandmother demanded.

Mae Faith entered the crowded square slowly, afraid of becoming lost among the milling bodies. She made herself as small as possible; her elbows hugging her sides and her head tucked under. She moved cautiously unused to so many people. He searching eyes darted and hopped over the crowd like a humming bird in honeysuckle. Pulling up short she let her arms fall to her sides. Squinching up her eyes she tried to read the big red and white sign. Moving closer she made-out the words GOD IS LOVE. This must be the tent she'd been looking for all this time.

A few people were going into the tent and Mae Faith followed them. Inside the canvas temple grey shadows moved about lisping phrases of welcome. Mae Faith found an empty bench and perched on the end of it. She sat quiet and still like a frightened bird.

A burst of light filled the tent and and the shadows were now solid human bodies lined up on narrow brown benches. An eddy of sound began at the front of the congregation and wound its way back as the time for the appearance of the healer drew near.

A small man with a shock of red hair began to climb the stairs to the platform. His movements were jerky and quick. Mae Faith thought he looked like a bantum rooster with his nervous manner and bright clothes.

Mae Faith could feel a tension, like a finely drawn wire, still the congregation. Their full attention on the slight figure of the healer.

The silence was broken as the preacher bowed his head and began saying a prayer for the sinners seeking to be cleansed in the blood of the Lamb and for all those who had come to be healed in body and spirit. Amens echoed his in supplication.

Immediately the healer began to stride back and forth on the platform saying, "Now's the time to get right with God, for the hour cometh when no man expects it."

The taut air began to quiver with small sounds of voices murmuring. Mae Faith sat frozen trying to understand the message the healer was giving. Through a swirl of Hallelujahs she could make out the words: "Sinners'll be flicked into the fire and brimstone like a fly snapped off yar sleeve. So my friends I beg ya, I entreat ya. . . ."

A big woman with orange hair fell to her knees and began to talk in a strange way. People began to twist and writhe as though in pain. Trembling hands reached out for solace and clenched jaws released groans of ecstacy as the healer promised, "Jesus don't just minister to yar soul, He takes care of yar bodily ills too." The torrent of noise washed over Mae Faith as people were healed and saved. She sat rigid and confused, how could she hear if God spoke to her? A still, small voice would be drowned in this flood of emotion and clamor. Suddenly, Mae Faith was trapped by a stiff forest of hands reaching upward to grasp ahold of something or someone to save them.

Frantically, she glanced about her seeking escape and safety; there wasn't any. Turning, Mae Faith noticed a little girl clutching at a tent pole, her frightened eyes staring at her. They were two points of silence in a sea of sound. The child hesitantly left her shelter and moved toward Mae Faith. The child sought protection from things she didn't understand and Mae Faith's stillness seemed to offer refuge in this storm. Putting her arm around her, Mae Faith drew the girl next to her and together they sat patient and waiting.

Later, on her way home, Mae Faith let the evening's coolness wash over her. The delicate sounds of dusk comforted her with the chirp of crickets, the rumble of frogs callin' rain, and the cotton-soft quietness.

As she came up the lane she saw the golden haze of the oil lamp through the window. Entering the house she saw that she was late for supper. Her folks had eaten and gone to bed; her sisters were huddled by the light slowly turning the pages of a catalog. Quietly, Mae Faith began to clear the supper dishes.

AUTUMN'S WARNING

Snapping, crunching.
Picnic lunching.
Tree tops singing
Birds a'winging
Southward going.
Not yet snowing.
Wind's a'brisking,
Squirrels a'frishing.
Leaves a'dancing.
Backward glancing
Day's bright dawning
Autumn's warning.
Farmers hurrying.
Creatures scurrying.
Time's a'fleeting.
S'almost sleeting.
Valley's misting.
All ears listening.
Snowlflakes falling
Winter's calling
Silently,
"I'm here."

—Janet Gauntt

DAWN

The dawn is coming; I've perceived three clouds
Like Persian rugs, purple, gold-edged. They trail
The far-off mountain crown that borders night's
Bedarkened kingdoms. Stars that lorded fade
Into the virgin sky great with the child
Of morning. Even the ragged wind seems
To be shepherding clouds that are like lambs
To the cradle of the earth's eastern edge.
The angelic song-birds are heralding
The birth of the day, the birth of the sun
As all the darkened world turns to see a
Star rising in the east.

Harvey Estes

PARADISE RE-LOST

The faces smile from pages
Of colored comic strips
You wrap around the garbage
On Monday afternoon.

The petals smile from flowers
In vases shiny smooth
Implanted in the styrofoam
That sits upon a grave.

My mind is just a camera
And not a dictionary.
All life is a collage
And God has lost the glue.

—Harvey Estes

THE FISHING TRIP

A soul sun crept a rugged path upward
from beneath the muddied waters,
glowing its life over a human earth
out of the depths of the Existent.

A human form sliced the cool waters,
propelling his fishing craft across the flowing equilibrium,
as exerted beams fell upon a darkened stream
lighting both world and sea.

As the cold iron weight dropped into the blue-green,
the isolated island set stationed
along the moving river of life
below the laboring sun.

Man's atmosphere took the water animal's breath,
as he snatched the forty fishes unto him
that his multitude take
living food from the toil of his sweating brow.
As the western sun died in the east,
He straight away took up His burden
and walked the troubled waters
that they be made calm with His equilibrium;
and break the bread and distribute the fishes
so that they be fulfilled.

—Jim Houghton

Lots Of Balloons

by Susan Davidson

Joe Lea fought against the wakefulness as a drowning person fights against the current of dark water. But the ebbing of reality was too great for her, and the sound which was causing her struggle filled her. As a full conscienceness flowed into her, she realized it was the baby crying again. Quickly she tried to go to him before Frank awoke. But she was too late, again.

"For God's sake, Joelee, when's that baby going to stop waking up crying everyday?"

Joe Lea left the bed and went to the other side of the room and looked into the packing crate make-shift bed which held her baby, her and Frank's baby.

"Frank, please say like Joe-Lee-a," she pronounced each syllable slowly and carefully as she picked up the baby. "You have to get up now anyway so what difference does it make?"

Frank only grunted and went out the back door to wash. Joe Lea sat down and shivered as she felt the cold wind caused by his exit fill the room. She began to nurse the baby and immediately his crying stopped. When he was content and warm he settled into sleep and Joe Lea carefully replaced him in his packing crate and went into the kitchen to fix Frank's breakfast.

Frank had finished his washing and was making a fire in the stove but the morning chill had not left the room yet. He looked up at Joe Lea as she entered. He would have liked to share a smile with her but she had turned her back to him as she began breakfast. No matter.

"I don't guess I'll be home till late tonight Joelee. Mr. Cooper wants that last load of logs finished up before the load from the hill comes down."

"I reckon because today's payday might just have something to do with the matter too. Isn't that right Frank?"

Frank looked up, hurt, though he should have been able to control it by now. Frank was a prudent man, never did he waste hard earned money on fancies for himself, and only rarely did he allow money to go for trivial things Joe Lea desired. Yet because of what Joe Lea thought was expected of her, because her mother had demonstrated it and willed it to her, she squabbled about money with her husband. It was the way of all the women she knew; and even though she knew Frank didn't deserve it, she accused him of depriving her and the baby of things they needed because of imaginable evils in town.

"Joe Lea, I ain't goin' through that with you again. I have to work late tonight and then I'm goin' into town for supplies."

Joe Lea kept her back to Frank and didn't answer him. He hated it when she closed him out like this. It made him do things he later felt embarrassed about. He went up behind her and put his arms around her.

"Honey, we're poor. You know I don't drink our money up in town. I go into Walker's store, I get our supplies, I talk for a few minutes with old Walker and I leave. I don't even go into any other place except Walker's. Why do you always think I do?"

Joe Lea turned in Frank's arms and looked at his pleading face. She knew he was telling the truth. He always told her the truth, yet she never seemed to be able to stop herself from making the same accusations. She hated herself for it but there was something which always forced her to do it.

"Oh Frank, I know. I'm just tired. Tired of living in this two room house, tired, like you are, of hearing the baby cry every morning, and tired of wanting things I can't ever seem to have." She said this in a quiet, weak voice and he was afraid she'd start crying.

"Joelee, tell me some little thing to bring back for you." Her face lit up and he quickly added, "Now just some little thing Joelee that will cheer you up a bit."

"Balloons, Frank, bring some balloons for the baby. Get a whole lot and different colors."

"But Joelee, balloons don't even last," he protested. "and besides the baby's too little to care about balloons."

"That's why I want them Frank! Just because they're not a bit useful and the baby won't care about them."

"Well then what's the use of getting them? Sometimes I just can't understand you one bit!" Frank was beginning to feel exasperated and as his voice rose, the pattern began all over again.

"Well don't try to understand me. Just bring me some balloons back," she said, a hardness entering her voice. She turned her back to him and finshed her cooking.

When Frank had left, Joe Lea did her work quickly. Cleaning the little house usually never took over an hour. The only thing she had to occupy the rest of her day with was the baby and daydreams. She took the baby and sat down in front of the window and stared at the mountains. While rocking the baby, she began talking to him and telling him about her dreams.

"Look Baby, see those mountains? Frank said the big city is just on the other side. Everyone lives in pretty little houses. Not little the way this house is, but a kind of sweet littleness, like you Baby. Annie Boyd's girl Kate went to live in that city and when she came back, my how fine she looked! So neat and clean and her hair curled just right. Why, I do believe she had on makeup but her mamma said it was just Kate's fine natural coloring. Still, she looked mightly happy. I went to see the Boyds when Kate was back visiting that time last year and she had brought her mamma awhole stack of magazines with the nicest colored pictures you've ever seen. What do you

Please turn to Page 16

THE FATHER

Through the fields of deep night with its star-burning skies,
Drifted ever so sweetly his three children's cries.
And though strong were the echoes of their all-cherished glee,
A softness did drape them with sweet mystery.

He listened intently for the next laughing noise
Of Peter and Michael and Denny—his boys.
He stood there a'watchin' them romp o'er the earth,
Their faces just beamin' with brisk, bubbly mirth.

And his heart and his face seemed to burst with a pride
That no cover or pretense or force could dare hide.
These truly were his sons—all truly were one;
For their flesh has his flesh—their tie had begun.

But what hurt did then follow as he saw them flash by?
What sharp gush of anguish? What blur in his eyes?
When a breeze did then blow so to offer sweet rain,
He reached for his children but his tries were in vain;
And when the three visions vanished and a farewell each gave,
The father cried softly on the freshly-turned graves.

—Janis Mackin

PETER
DENNY
MICHAEL

so
go away
nobody knows

admit
the
useless duration covering now and forever
more amen amen amen

there once
did i live
live
with a vigor
no animal could surpass
who drew
the myriad patterns
of discontent
who so faithfully
committed to such
such a pleasant pleasant task
'twas i, me
me who so ordered
and learned so well

i,
left
alone
to
undo.

2

by

Mary King

I.
exist
today
tomorrow
hopefully
never
come
come
home with me
my world
of
black dark
upside
down
in a cardboard box
warped by today's rain

ELEGY

On tuesday last
A crippled champion,
A fierce and white-haired sage,
Sailed against a final purple squall
To test the mettle of his worthy craft.

Storms are much the same
And yet what vessel's man
Can ride those piercing crests
And rush down endless blackened troughs
To needle through the raging peaks again?

Now calm resides where purple went before
And blackboard sands erased by white-haired wake,
The waves beat back by virtue of his lore
Leave many feet a smoother path to take.

—Denis Hermecz

LORELEI

Lovely
little lost
Luring
lily-like
Lass,

Longing
largely lone
Leaping
leopard-like
Lad,

Lie low
Linger long.

Lo
Lorelei
Lullaby.

—Pauline Beach

THE HUMAN JUNKPILE

It
is a
massive
conglomeration of all
those who no
longerfit.
The
loved and unloved.
The happy and
sad. The
weak and strong.
Each
battered hulk
will end
upon this misshapen tower,
this pile of human misery.

—Diana Hamilton

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think was in the first one I looked at Baby? Pictures of children playing with balloons. Lots and lots of balloons and every color in the world. Kate said people in the city always have balloons for their children to play with. I guess they just buy them by the hundreds so when the kids come in and say 'Mamma, where's me a balloon to play with?' they've always got them. That's why I want them for you Baby. Frank says that they ain't got no use, just a waste of money. Frank doesn't understand. But I want my Baby to have balloons too. Just like those kids in the city. I want balloons for my Baby and me. Isn't that right Baby?"

Frank was going to be a lot later that night than he had expected, but it was for a good reason, a real good reason. He had really run into luck tonight in Walker's. Walker was trying to sell one of the cows he kept out back behind his house because his last daughter had married last week and he and his wife just had no use for two cows anymore. After about an hour of haggling, cussing, persuading, shaming and arguing he had convinced Frank to buy it on a type of installment plan he and Frank had worked out. He wasn't worried about getting paid for the cow, everyone knew that there was a no more honest man than Frank Henson in the world.

Frank loaded the cow into his pickup and drove home in the settling dusk and visualized what Joe Lea would say when she saw the cow, a real fine looking animal. And just think, no more of that awful powdered milk. And they'd have butter and maybe Joe Lea would make cheese too. He imagined her looking angrily up at him when he went in but how she would throw herself at him and hug him when she saw the cow. She'd probably tell him how smart he was and promise him milk custard the next day. Frank felt warm and big.

He entered the kitchen and Joe Lea was sitting at the kitchen table doing nothing. The baby wasn't in sight. She looked up at him, not with a mean look but it was not a loving look either. Just a look of lasting suffering. Suddenly the good feelings he'd had left Frank and he felt air in his stomach the way it felt when he drove over a hill too fast.

"You didn't tell me you'd be this late," she said in a dry voice, emphasizing the last two words.

Now Joelee, just wait one second before you say anything else. I've got a real surprise for you, little lady," he said, trying to sound at ease and truely sure he knew she'd be wild with joy when she saw it. He went over and took her hand and pulled her from her chair. "Now close your eyes, we have to go outside for you to see it."

"What is it Frank, for goodness sake, don't act silly." She tried to keep her voice cool but excitement was beginning to affect her also.

"Close your eyes honey." He led her to the door and outside to the cow. When they were beside it he said, "Now you can look Joelee."

Joe Lea slowly opened her eyes, expecting she knew not what. A cow, skinny, boney, chewing was standing there before her.

"A cow," she said with a puzzled voice.

"Yes, a cow Joelee. Just think, fresh milk! Fresh milk for us."

"It's a cow. Is this the surprise? Is this it?" Her voice was still puzzled.

"Yes. Isn't it grand? I bought him from Walker. You know since their daughter got married, his wife and him just don't need it anymore. I got it real reasonable Joelee. Say you think it's great Joelee."

"Joe-Lee-a," she screamed at him. "Yes, I think it's wonderful! I think it's grand Frank." She was almost crying and Frank couldn't quite understand what was happening.

"Well, what's wrong then honey?"

"Oh Frank, I think it's just grand. But do you know what is even more grander than that ugly old brown cow? You! You, Frank, you! You barely make enough to keep food in our stomachs yet you seem to think the cow will manage to feed us without being fed herself! Did you even think of that Frank! We can't afford a cow!"

This sudden practability in Joe Lea overwhelmed him. In the back of his mind he had known she might not be as happy as he about the cow, yet he had never expected such a logical reason why.

"Well, we'll manage it Joelee. It will all be worth it and work out."

"Damn, damn, damn, damn!" she screamed at him and ran into the house.

Suddenly the weight of the day filled Frank's body and he was very tired. He leaned against a tree and stared at the mountains and wondered what would happen if he just took off for the city and never came back.

After awhile he led the cow around to the back of the house and tied her to a tree. Then he went into the house. It was dark, Joe Lea had gone to bed. He found some cornbread in the kitchen and ate it but it was tasteless. Quietly he entered the bedroom and in an even motion removed his clothes and climbed into bed carefully so as not to wake Joe Lea. But she was not sleeping.

"Frank?"

"Yes, Joelee?"

"Frank, did you bring me lots of colored balloons?"

He wanted to say yes, in the form of a cow he had brought her lots of colored balloons, but she wouldn't understand him.

"I forgot. I'm sorry Joelee."

"It's Joe-Lee-a," she said and she turned over and tried to sleep.

FROM THE ASHES

There sat the old man upon the rocks,
bearded one with synchronized eyes,
a smile upon his face, a silent lady by his side.

Across the river-sea a shadow stalked and
gathered golden webs to snare its prey.
The darkling shadow creeped unnoticed toward man,
a hopeless figure cast of wordless prayers,
yet yearning to hear the Word, to make the cry.
Closer, closer to its goal, anxiously the shadow
stretched a flowing, webby hand,
but suddenly, there, separated and solitary,
man wheeled, and from shock alone
screamed a cry which echoed 'cross the river-sea.

The lady turned to hear the separate, suffering cry;
she whispered silently "hope;"
the old man remained smiling, upon the rocks.

Death's pallid shadow stomped the ground,
cursed the sundrops and the lady (in blue),
bit coal-black lips, and then moved on,
farther and farther away from the old man upon the rocks,
the bearded one with synchronized eyes,
a smile upon his face, a silent lady by his side.

—Foley